

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

STH 26 CORRIDOR STUDY JANESVILLE TO WATERTOWN ROCK, JEFFERSON & DODGE COUNTIES

Wednesday, June 9, 1999
Riverside Middle School
131 Hall Street, Watertown
5-9 p.m. Presentation at 8 p.m.

Monday, June 14, 1999
Jefferson East Elementary School
120 South Sanborn Avenue, Jefferson
4-8 p.m. Presentation at 7 p.m.

Monday, June 21, 1999
Northside Intermediate School
159 Northside Drive, Milton
4-8 p.m. Presentation at 7 p.m.

Welcome to the public information meeting regarding the STH 26 Corridor Study. We appreciate your attendance and interest in this project. For the convenience of the area public, we have scheduled three public information meetings, one in Watertown, one in Jefferson and one in Milton. **The same information is available at all three meetings.**

This handout and the exhibits on display were prepared to help familiarize you with the project details. We encourage you to view the exhibits on display. Please feel free to ask questions and make comments to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and consultant staff. A comment form is attached to the back of this handout for your convenience in providing us with written comments, which you may leave with us today or mail to us after the meeting. We ask that all comments be returned by Wednesday, July 7, 1999.

Please note that the first three hours of each meeting are in an open house format. As noted above, a brief presentation will then be made, with the open house format in session again before concluding the meeting.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Earlier this year, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation - Transportation District 1 initiated a study of transportation needs and solutions along Highway 26 from Interstate 90 at Janesville to Highway 60 (East), north of Watertown. This 48 mile study, which has been contracted to the consulting firm of Earth Tech, Inc. of Madison, includes preliminary engineering and development of an Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS. This study will consider alternatives for converting STH 26 to four lanes and it will consider bypass alternatives for the cities of Milton, Jefferson and Watertown. The city of Fort Atkinson is presently bypassed with a two lane rural roadway on four lane right of way. Other two lane to four lane planned transportation improvements in the corridor include STH 26 between IH 90 and the city of Milton currently under construction and STH 26 through the village of Johnson Creek at IH 94 in 2001.

Study Purpose. This study is being undertaken at this time for the following reasons:

STH 26 is a Route of Statewide Importance:

- \$ Links major Wisconsin communities to the Fox River Valley, Chicago and other points south and west of Wisconsin
- \$ Located midway between the cities of Madison and Milwaukee
- \$ Identified as a connector route on the Corridors 2020 Plan

Local Interest in Study:

- \$ Serves local economy and transportation needs
- \$ The cities of Milton, Jefferson and Watertown have combination of local and through traffic within their cities
- \$ The cities of Jefferson and Watertown have requested bypass studies

Growing Traffic:

- \$ Traffic is increasing
- \$ Truck traffic is relatively high
- \$ Congestion through cities on narrow roadways will grow
- \$ Current or projected future traffic volumes exceed thresholds for consideration of a four lane highway

Preserving a Transportation Corridor:

- \$ Future development may preclude reasonable bypass options
- \$ Access limits are needed for a safe highway
- \$ Coordinate land use with roadway needs

Study Committees. For planning purposes, the overall project has been divided into three study area segments, each having its own Study Committee to inform affected communities and the public about the study process, to gather information about local needs and to help select the best solution. Segment 1 is the area between IH 90 at Janesville to Fort Atkinson. Segment 2 is the area from Fort Atkinson to IH 94 at Johnson Creek. Segment 3 is from IH 94 to STH 60 (East) north of Watertown. Study Committees are comprised of members from communities likely to be impacted by alternatives. Each committee contains a mix of elected officials and technical staff along with business and environmental representatives.

Environmental Impact Statement. In compliance with state and federal laws, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared for the proposed improvements of STH 26. The EIS will assess the environmental impacts of alternatives, including: (1) no-build, (2) improvements along the existing rural corridor, with possible relocated alignments along portions of the route, and (3) bypass corridors around the cities of Milton, Jefferson, and Watertown. At its conclusion, the EIS will recommend preferred alternatives.

Access Management. Planning the number of and controlling the location of intersecting roads and driveways will be an important consideration of this corridor study. In the past, on highways that were converted to four lanes, the Department generally implemented freeway access control standards, which allow access only at interchange locations, along new community bypasses. Similarly, expressway access control standards have generally been implemented in areas where the existing highway is expanded from two to four lanes. This means access to the four lane facility has been accommodated with at-grade intersections at side roads. Private property access, including farm field entrances, would be allowed at controlled spacing in expressway sections.

Alternatives. One of the main purposes of these meetings is to present conceptual corridor alternatives. Between each community, the intent is to add additional lanes on one side or other. There are several conceptual corridor alternatives for the Milton, Jefferson and Watertown areas under consideration at this time. Maps showing the location of these corridors are included at the beginning of this handout. **It should be emphasized that these corridor alternatives are preliminary and are being presented for review and comment at these meetings.**

Comparison of Impacts. The EIS will include a comparison of impacts between viable alternatives. Preliminary screening matrices, which are on display today, will be used to

narrow the various corridor alternatives to those that are most viable. Matrices showing the impacts for the Milton, Jefferson and Watertown areas are included in this handout.

Real Estate Acquisition. Wisconsin law defines how the Department acquires property necessary for improvement projects. The pamphlet "The Rights of Landowners Under Wisconsin Eminent Domain Law" explains this procedure, and is available today.

Public Involvement. The Department strongly encourages continual information exchange with the public throughout the development of this study. Specifically, any information people have concerning drainage patterns, archeological or historical resources, or hazardous materials or contaminated soils is appreciated.

Proposed Time Schedule. The timetable below indicates the current schedule for the project.

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Public Information Meetings #1 | June 9, 14 and 21, 1999 |
| Public Information Meetings #2..... | November 1999 |
| Draft Environmental Impact Statement Available | May 2000 |
| Public Hearings | June 2000 |

The following could begin as noted but will depend on future funding approvals through the Transportation Projects Commission:

| | |
|--|------|
| Final Environmental Impact Statement Available and Record of Decision..... | 2001 |
| Real Estate Acquisition for an Approved Project Could Begin as Early as | 2005 |
| Construction for an Approved Project Could Begin as Early as | 2008 |

PROJECT CONTACTS

If you have any questions regarding the information provided in this handout or presented here today or if questions come up at a later time, please contact one of the individuals listed below.

Mr. James Oeth, P.E., *Project Manager*

Earth Tech, Inc.

1210 Fourier Drive, Suite 100

Madison, WI 53717

(800) 548-1530, ext. 151 Fax (608) 836-9767

Mr. Jeff Gust, *District Project Manager*

WisDOT - District 1

2101 Wright Street

Madison, WI 53704

(608) 246-3862 Fax 246-3819

Ms. Kimberly Johnson, P.E., *Public Information Coordinator*

Kjohnson Engineers, Inc.

7818 Big Sky Drive Suite 118

Madison, WI 53719

(608) 829-3858 Fax 829-3996

COMMENT FORM
LIC INFORMATION MEETINGS
STH 26 CORRIDOR STUDY
JUNE 9, 14 and 21, 1999

You may leave the completed form at the registration table, or complete it later and return by Wednesday, July 7, 1999. This form may be used as a mailer by folding it as shown on the reverse side.

Name:

Mailing Address:

Please tell us what Municipality you live in (i.e. City of Watertown, Town of Milton, Village of Johnson Creek):

Please tell us what Municipality you work in (if applicable):

Please tell us what meeting you attended:

June 9 at Watertown

June 14 at Jefferson

June 21 at Milton

Comments:

Please use additional sheets, if necessary.

Kjohnson Engineers, Inc.
7818 Big Sky Drive Suite 118
Madison, WI 53719
